A LETTER TO THE PROTESTANT DISSENTERS OF IRELAND.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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LETTER, &c.

Fellow Country-men, Fellow PROTESTANTS *and Lovers of Liberty.*

AMIDST the Diſtreſs which every honeſt and Free-born Mind muſt ſuffer by the Calamities threaten'd to our Country, from a band of Men, inſtigated by Principles the moſt Malevolent and Miſchievous, that ever diſturbed the Peace of Society, there is one Circumſtance, which, to you, my worthy Brethren, muſt have ſomething in it truly acceptable, that by this Means, an Opportunity is given you, and you are evidently called upon by the Providence of God, to make manifeſt to the World, that the ſame magnanimous and truly religious Spirit, which in former Days of Danger animated your Forefathers in the ſteady and reſolute ſupport of the Cauſe of Liberty, and their Country, continues, with equal Vigor, to inſpire your Breaſts, and to render you in all Reſpects, the worthy Succeſſors of thoſe excellent Men, who counted the unalienable Rights of Conſcience the moſt ineſtimable Enjoyment in human Life, and had an Abhorrence of Slavery, as more to be dreaded than Death: In earneſt, what higher Honour can poſſibly be put on that honeſt

Cauſe, by which we are diſtinguiſhed, and which all of us have ſo juſtly at Heart, than by letting the World ſee, that in ſpite of any little Differences, to which, in the preſent infirm State of human Nature, the beſt Minds are made liable, ſuch is its Efficacy, as to bind, in firm Union, the whole Body as one Man, and from the Youth of Seventeen, to the aged of Seventy, to rouze us to Action, when thereunto called by our lawful Superiors, in behalf of our Holy Religion, brought into danger by the perſecuting Powers of *Popery*, and in Defence of our happy Conſtitution and Civil Liberties, outrageouſly invaded by blaſphemous Pretenders to *Divine Hereditary Right*.

It is a Quality inſeparable from great and generous Minds, that when the common and glorious Cauſe of Liberty and their Country, calls for their Attention, all leſſer Matters are inſtantly laid aſide and forgotten; and, to your Immortal Honour, be it ſpoken, no ſooner have theſe precious Intereſts become at any time the Prize, than every more partial and particular Regard, has with equal Wiſdom and Largeneſs of Heart, been made a generous Sacrifice to them: Continue, as it becomes ſteadfaſt and liberal Minds, to ſuffer the ſame Cauſes to produce the ſame Effects.

That we were born in a Land of Liberty, we owe to the bleſſing of God on the wiſe and gallant, and inflexible Attachment of our Anceſtors to the Laws and Conſtitution of their Country, and to Liberty of Conſcience; and if we mean to continue free, and to tranſmit this ineſtimable Inheritance to Poſterity, as where is there

there one amongſt us, numerous as we are, of a Mind ſo baſely degenerated, as not to feel this the firſt and governing Purpoſe of his Heart? The Path lies plain before us; by putting our Truſt in the living God, and, with one Heart, and one Soul, uniting all our Hands, at the hazard of every Thing elſe that is dear to us upon Earth, in ſupport of our legal and free Government, as it is happily eſtabliſhed in the preſent Royal Family; under whoſe righteous and mild Adminiſtration, the Liberties of the Subject in general have been ſecured and enlarged, and our Rights in particular, in many important Inſtances, vindicated and reſtored.

As Villainy can never hope for Succeſs, but by the Means of Falſhood and Deluſion, and the Practice of every baſe and diſhonourable Art, you will not be ſurprized, and you are incapable of being miſled, by the wretched deluſory Stuff, at preſent, induſtriouſly ſpread abroad, by the Abettors of this infamous Rebellion; that the Son of a bigoted *Papiſt*, educated at *Rome*, and ſupported by *France* and *Spain*, is become a *Proteſtant*, and zealous for Reformation and Liberty: But tho' this Story be abundantly too groſs to deſerve a particular Refutation, it may not be amiſs, in a few Words, to obſerve, that whatever Character of this Sort, this lawleſs Diſturber of the Publick Tranquility may at any Time think fit to aſſume, his Actions, the only Evidence to be truſted of the Sentiments of a Heart, formed under the diſcipline of Jeſuits and Prieſts, moſt manifeſtly give the Lye to all ſuch Pretenſions. By whoſe Aſſiſtance and Direction has he now carried Sword

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and Rapine into *North-Britain?* Is it not from that Power which, from Generation to Generation, has been making perpetual War on the Liberties of Mankind religious and civil? Upon what Pretence does he or his Father inſolently lay Claim to the Crown of theſe Kingdoms, after having been for ever excluded by the Laws, and ſo often abjured with united Conſent of Heart and Voice by the free Inhabitants? Is it not on the goodly Title of *Divine*, *Hereditary*, and *Indefeaſible Right?* A Doctrine big with every Miſchief that *Prieſtly* Policy can deviſe, and a Free-People can fear, and that is poſſible to be perpetrated by arbitrary Domination and abſolute Power. Thus then, is it not ſelf-evident, and palpable to Senſe, that the only Foundation of this moſt monſtrous Claim, be it avowed, or be it concealed, is moſt groſly tyrannical? And betwixt Tyranny and you ye Sons of Liberty, I truſt, God has put hereditary and implacable Enmity, let the Tyrant make Choice of what Denomination he will, *Papiſt*, *Epiſcopalian*, or *Preſbyterian*.

It muſt be needleſs to obſerve, that when all that is dear to us is thus ſet at Stake, and while we are ſo deeply embarked in a Cauſe wherein Life itſelf, to Minds like yours, can never be counted too coſtly a Sacrifice, the Circumſtance of what is called our legal Incapacity, ariſing from the *Sacramental Teſt*, ſhould only ſerve to whet your Ardor the more, and in all other Reſpects deſerves, and ought to be treated by you with a generous and total Neglect.—God forbid, that any one amongſt us ſhould run the leaſt Hazard of hurting his Conſcience! In the Day of Danger,

ger, ſhould fighting come to be neceſſary, then will a good Conſcience prove the beſt, and a ſufficient Support: But, confiding in the Wiſdom of our Government, and the Honour of our Country, let each of us, with Alacrity of Heart, accept ſuch Truſts, and act ſuch Parts as are ſuitable to his Station; well knowing, that under the preſent Adminiſtration, no Man will ever be allowed to ſuffer, for doing his utmoſt to ſerve and ſave his Country: Of this there has already been given a moſt ſatisfying Evidence by the Hon. Houſe of Commons, who upon the third Day of their preſent Seſſion, unanimouſly reſolved to the following Effect.

"THAT ſuch of the Proteſtant Diſſenters "of *Ireland* as have already accepted Commiſ- "ſions in the *Militia*, or have acted under the "Commiſſions of Array, have thereby done "good Service to his Majeſty and their Country, "and that any Perſon who ſhall commence any "Proſecution againſt any Proteſtant, who has "accepted of, or ſhall accept of, or act under "ſuch Commiſſions, ſhall be deemed an Enemy "to his Majeſty, and a Friend to the Pretender."

BEFORE I conclude, give me Leave to remark, that the Confidence of the Friends to our happy Conſtitution in this Country, and the Deſpair of its Enemies, remain materially to be fixed in Virtue of your Conduct. Such is your known Strength, and ſuch has always been your Fidelity to the true Intereſts of Liberty, Religion, and your Country, that once the united Force of the truly animating Principles of this glorious

glorious Cauſe, comes to have its perfect Work on the native Bravery of your Spirits, neither need Inſurrections be any longer apprehended from within, nor Invaſions from abroad, be Matter of Terror any more. Ariſe then my truſty Fellow-Country-men, *quit yourſelves like Men, and be ſtrong.*

I am

Your moſt faithful

Dublin, 12.
Oct. 1745. and affectionate Brother,

A PROTESTANT DISSENTER.